

why they are the *crème de la crème*. Chapters 7a and 7b picture and describe some of these items. Chapter 7c, entitled “Gems Showcase,” is a visual feast. No fewer than 43 pages are devoted to images, almost all in colour, of polar material such as notices of various kinds, postcards, covers, and letters. This section alone is worth the price of the book.

The ultimate goal of many philatelists is to exhibit their collections and, they hope, to earn a commensurate award. Chapter eight outlines the differences between showing one’s collection and exhibiting it. Although many of the processes involved in showing a polar exhibit are the same as those of exhibiting a general postal history collection, the author explains the differences in some detail. If an exhibit is to do well in competition, planning, deciding what to include, and preparing the exhibit are of paramount importance. The author spends considerable space discussing these aspects. It is an area well worth studying in detail, as it will repay prospective exhibitors in spades.

The concluding chapter is packed with useful information from a different perspective. In the first eight chapters, the author looks at the collectibles side of the hobby, whereas the last chapter is devoted to the collector. He asks (p. 134), “What constitutes the polar philatelic person?” Readers learn that a great commitment to the hobby is a prerequisite. The author then lists five additional characteristics of such collectors: knowledge of existing material; knowledge of polar history; knowledge of current polar affairs; and knowledge that they have pursued polar philately to their personal utmost. Obviously, the common thread is knowledge and this comprehensive, professionally written publication goes a long way in imparting a considerable amount of polar-related philatelic knowledge to readers.

Essence of Polar Philately is a scholarly publication that deserves a place on the bookshelves of philatelic libraries. The work is highly recommended for all lovers of postal history, but it will be of particular interest to collectors with an affinity for airmail and ship mail with a polar connection.

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RESURRECTING DR. MOSS: THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF A ROYAL NAVY SURGEON, EDWARD LAWTON MOSS MD, RN, 1843–1880. By PAUL C. APPLETON. Edited by WILLIAM BARR. Calgary, Alberta: University of Calgary Press, 2008. Co-published with the Arctic Institute of North America. ISBN 978-1-55238-232-5. xvi + 252 p., map, b&w illus., colour plates, notes, bib., index. Softbound. Cdn\$42.95.

In mid-August of 1875, Dr. Edward Lawton Moss, accompanying Captain George Nares and other members of the British Arctic Expedition, climbed to the top of the southern

plateau of Washington Irving Island off the entrance to Dobbin Bay on the east coast of Ellesmere Island. Much to their surprise, they discovered two ancient-looking stone cairns on the plateau, but failed to locate any evidence of who might have built them. Moss made a quick sketch of the two cairns, a sketch he later back in England turned into a colour painting, now kept at the Scott Polar Institute in Cambridge. The drawing and the mention of the cairns in the expedition diaries resulted in our own investigation of the plateau in July 1979. By then, numerous finds of Norse artifacts in nearby 12th century Inuit house ruins strongly suggested that the builders of the old cairns could have been Norse explorers from Greenland (McCullough and Schledermann, 1999). The Washington Irving Island incident was only a minor episode in the life of Edward Moss, Royal Navy surgeon, naturalist, and talented artist, whose participation in the British Arctic Expedition constituted his only encounter with life in the Far North.

Prior to his sudden death in March 2006, Paul C. Appleton had submitted his manuscript, “Resurrecting Dr. Moss,” to the University of Calgary Press. The work was later edited by William Barr.

Appleton’s biographical sketch of Dr. Moss is based primarily on the doctor’s correspondence with family and friends, particularly with his wife, Thomasina, who died in 1927. Appleton was aided in his research by earlier efforts of a Vancouver lawyer, Robie Louis Reid, who had corresponded with Thomasina Moss and published a small article about her newlywed life with Dr. Moss in Esquimalt, British Columbia.

Edward Lawton Moss was born in Dublin, Ireland, in 1843. In the early chapters, the author takes us through Moss’s young life, the early death of his father, and his graduation as a medical doctor in December 1862. After graduation, Moss apparently spent two years in America. Upon returning to Ireland in 1864, he joined the Medical Branch of the Royal Navy. The author points out that in those days, naval doctors were encouraged to pursue various scientific investigations in addition to their medical work, something that seems to have suited Dr. Moss well. In March 1864, he was posted to his first ship, HMS *Bulldog*, serving in the West Indies.

In chapters four and five, Appleton describes Moss’s service as part of what was termed “gun-boat diplomacy” in support of the then expansive British Empire. During an attempted ramming of an enemy ship off Haiti, the *Bulldog* ran aground and was eventually scuttled by the Captain. In 1866, Moss was posted to the troop ship HMS *Simoom*, where he spent the next four years in what appears to have been a rather boring and routine existence. His service at sea was followed by land-based service at the Portland Sick Quarters in Dorset.

Life for Dr. Moss took a decidedly more interesting turn in January 1872, when he was placed in charge of the naval medical facilities at the Pacific Station in Esquimalt, B.C. The chance for a more settled existence turned his thoughts to marriage, a move much encouraged by his mother. In chapters seven to ten, Appleton provides the reader with

a good impression of what must have been an exhilarating period of Moss's life. A year following his arrival in Esquimalt, Moss traveled to San Francisco, where he met and married his fiancée Thomasina, who had traveled by rail from New York across the recently expanded United States. British Columbia was itself a very young province, having joined Canada only a year earlier. In the Northwest, border disputes between the United States and Canada had been ongoing for some time, interrupted only by the American Civil War. Arguments over sovereignty of the San Juan Islands nearly resulted in open conflict. Surprisingly, Appleton refers only briefly to this incident, which saw American and British forces facing each other over an argument about compensation for a dead pig. Resolution of the conflict was achieved in 1860, without any shots fired. Small British and U.S. military forces co-existed peacefully on the island until 1872, when a commission, appointed by Kaiser Wilhelm I of Germany, decided in favour of the United States claim. The British soldiers were transferred to Victoria, where Dr. Moss looked after them at the base in Esquimalt.

In December 1874, Moss was offered a position with the British 1875 Arctic Expedition under Captain George Nares. With his wife and baby daughter, Moss returned to England and reported for duty in April 1875. He was assigned to HMS *Alert* under Captain Nares. For the reader with a primary interest in Arctic exploration, Chapters 11 to 16 represent an interesting perspective of the Nares Expedition, particularly with reference to the surprising speed with which members of the spring sledging parties were stricken by scurvy. Moss, who headed one of the support parties as far as Cape Joseph Henry, had to bring two men back to the ship as they were already suffering from unusual signs of fatigue and exhaustion. Scurvy brought death and misery to a great number of the men assigned to the three sledging parties. These were led by Albert Hastings Markham (attempting at least a farthest north), Pelham Aldrich (heading as far west as he could along the north shores of Ellesmere Island), and Lewis Beaumont, from HMS *Discovery* wintering south of HMS *Alert*, whose party was instructed to explore the northern coast of Greenland. The extensive documentation of the 1875 Arctic Expedition includes Moss's own excellent account (1878) and Nares's 1878 publication. Suffice it here to say that Appleton's treatment of this episode of Moss's life is well executed and an interesting addendum to Moss's own publication.

The final chapters of the book and of Moss's life leave the reader with a sense that the Esquimalt and Arctic postings presented two of the more exciting episodes in his life. In the early fall of 1878, Moss was ordered to serve on a small battleship, HMS *Research*, which was part of the British Mediterranean Fleet based in Beshika Bay, Turkey. The highlight of this episode seems to have been Moss's encounter and association with Heinrich Schliemann, who was excavating at Hisarlik, a site he claimed was the ancient city of Troy. Moss's interest in Schliemann's work and theories soon had to give way to his own next assignment as doctor onboard the training ship HMS *Atalanta*. Moss's last letter, addressed

to his brother, was written in Bermuda on 29 January 1880. There had been several cases of malignant yellow fever on board, and the ship was heading back to England. The ship and all hands were lost at sea. Moss was 36 years old.

The book is well written and amply illustrated with Moss's sketches and paintings. Although Moss was clearly a talented artist, the reader is left entirely uninformed about his artistic contributions, and no mention is made of his interest, training, or experience in sketching and painting. Overall, the book provides the reader with a good picture of British Naval life and yet another glimpse into the torturous practice of man-hauling heavily loaded sledges during British Arctic expeditions.

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TOWARDS AN ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE NAIN REGION, LABRADOR. By BRYAN C. HOOD. Edited by WILLIAM W. FITZHUGH. Washington, D.C.: Arctic Studies Center, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, 2008. Contributions to Circumpolar Anthropology 7. ISBN 978-0-9816142-0-5. 366 p., maps, b&w illus., references, index. Softbound. US\$34.95.

Bryan Hood has worked throughout the circumpolar region for more than 30 years—in northern Labrador, northern Norway and Russia, Greenland, and Baffin Island. This volume presents the results of conceptual and physical revisits to early haunts in Nain, Labrador. The social structuration of space is the theoretical thread that holds together this “quilt of many coloured pieces,” as Hood describes his work (p. 347). Old and new archaeological data are brought together from several sites, with emphasis on Maritime Archaic and Pre-Dorset manifestations on Nukasusutok Island and Webb Bay/Port Manvers Run. An intriguing elongated distribution of Archaic material (Nukasusutok-5) as well as more discrete Palaeoeskimo lithic and hearth distributions (Nukasusutok-12), both on Nukasusutok Island, form the main body of analytical data.

The bulk of the analysis is based on the collection of coordinates for large numbers of flakes, artifacts, structural lithics, debris, and features, and consists of spatial analysis